

The Bible Echo, vol. 7

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Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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# 1892

## January 15, 1892

“From Faith to Faith” The Bible Echo 7, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

“Therein [in the gospel] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”*BEST January 15, 1892, par. 1*

This expression has been the subject of much learned discussion by theologians, and very few of them are agreed as to its meaning. The fact that learned men are disagreed in regard to it, need not frighten us from it with the thought that it cannot be understood, for we read that things hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed unto babes. If we are but simple enough to accept the obvious Scripture meaning, as explained by the Scriptures, we need not be in darkness.*BEST January 15, 1892, par. 2*

One of the greatest causes of the failure of many people to understand the book of Romans, and indeed any other portion of Scripture, is a failure to hold to first principles and Bible definitions. Men attempt to define some terms according to their theological training, and find it hard work to make them fit. Then if they at one time accept the Bible definition of a term, they do not adhere to it, but give it some other meaning the next time they meet with it. This can lead to nothing else but confusion.*BEST January 15, 1892, par. 3*

The term, “the righteousness of God.” We have already seen that it is an expression indicating God’s character, and that his character is set forth in the Ten Commandments. They sum up the whole duty of man, which is to be like God. The law, having been transgressed, cannot, as a matter of course, be perfectly represented in any person’s life, and so the gospel was devised, that man might in Christ find the perfect righteousness of the law. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, because it makes manifest the righteousness of God. The verse teaches that

the righteousness of God is revealed from one degree of faith to a higher degree of faith, and consequently that righteousness must ever be on the increase. This is shown by the quotation which the apostle makes to prove his statement. It must be that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, he argues, because it is written, "The just shall live by faith." The force of this is found in the fact that the Christian life, which is the result of faith, is progressive. The Christian life is a continual growth. Peter says: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." *2 Peter 3:17, 18*. The only way to keep from falling from that which we have, is to grow. David says of the righteous man that "he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." *Psalms 1:3*. This means continual growth. *BEST January 15, 1892, par. 4*

We read of the path of the just, that it "shall be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." *Proverbs 4:18*. But "the just shall live by faith;" therefore it must be that their faith increases. *BEST January 15, 1892, par. 5*

To the Hebrews, the apostle wrote: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." *Hebrews 6:1*. And in the epistle to the Philippians Paul said: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." *Philippians 3:12-14*. Here is set forth a continual reaching out for some higher attainment. The calling of God in Christ Jesus, is a calling to holy or righteous living, for we read: "But like as he which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy." *1 Peter 1:15, 16, Revised Version. BEST January 15, 1892, par. 6*

This righteousness to which we are called, and for higher attainments in which we must constantly press, is obtained only by

faith, as Paul expresses his desire to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. *Philippians 3:9*. Therefore, since righteousness comes only by faith, and it must increase, it follows that faith must also increase. So it was not a vain prayer which the disciples uttered, when they said, "Lord, increase our faith." *Luke 17:5*. *BEST January 15, 1892, par. 7*

That faith is susceptible of growth, is plainly declared by the Scriptures. Paul had hope that when the faith of the Corinthian brethren was increased, he should be helped by them to preach the gospel in the regions beyond them. *2 Corinthians 10:15, 16*. To the Thessalonians he wrote that he prayed exceedingly night and day, that he might see them, and might perfect that which was lacking in their faith. *1 Thessalonians 3:10*. And still later he wrote: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." *2 Thessalonians 1:3*. *BEST January 15, 1892, par. 8*

Their faith grew, and as a consequence their charity abounded. Charity, or love, is the fulfilling of the law. It is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, and is a result of true faith, for faith works by love, and the only righteousness which will be accepted when the Lord comes is that which is by the faith of Christ, "the righteousness which is of God by faith." Such being the teaching of Scripture, there is no reason why we should not understand *Romans 1:17* just as it reads: The righteousness of God is revealed, or manifested, from faith to faith. *BEST January 15, 1892, par. 9*

One or two notable instances recorded in Scripture will illustrate this. The apostle records that "by faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace." *Hebrews 11:31*. This case has been a cause of stumbling to some who have not given careful thought to it. It is well known that Rahab lied to the men sent by the king of Jericho to seize the spies (see *Joshua 2:2-6*), and they imagine that in saving her God placed a premium on lying, and that it is right sometimes to lie. Neither is true. Rahab was saved, not because of her lie, but

because of her faith. She, in common with all the people of Jericho, had heard how the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea, and how he had led the Israelites; but she alone, of all the inhabitants of Jericho, believed that the hand of the Lord was in the matter, and that he had given the land of Canaan to the Israelites. She had simple faith, but was totally ignorant of God's law. In the code of heathen morality, lying was accounted a virtue, and she knew nothing better. But her faith made it possible for her to be saved, and brought her into a place where she could learn righteousness. As a natural consequence her faith in God would increase when she learned more of Him. In her case we have a clear instance of the revelation of the righteousness of God from faith to faith.*BEST January 15, 1892, par. 10*

The same thing is true of Cornelius. He feared God with all his house, and gave much alms, and "prayed to God always." As a consequence, an angel was sent to him, directing him to send for Peter, who should tell him what he ought to do.*BEST January 15, 1892, par. 11*

The sum of the whole thing is that it is faith that brings God near to us. If we first believe that He is, He will reveal Himself to us more fully. If we rejoice in that light and walk in it, our faith will be increased, and that will bring more light. As with Rahab, so with all. God does not grant us a blessing because we are righteous, but in order that we may become righteous. When our faith brings us to Christ, it is that we may learn of Him. To our faith we add virtue and knowledge. But as faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, it follows that the more we really know—accept—of the word of God, the greater will be our faith. And so, increasing daily in faith, the just go on from strength to strength, until the dawning of the perfect day ushers them into the immediate presence of God.*BEST January 15, 1892, par. 12*

## February 1, 1892

“Unprofitable Servants” The Bible Echo 7, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

A very important lesson is conveyed by our Lord's illustration in *Luke 17:7-10*. It is not among Catholics alone that it is considered possible to perform works of supererogation. There are very many who, by their actions at least, hold that they can place God under obligations to them. Love of approbation, and the overvaluing of one's own deeds, are so universal that there are very few who do not at times have some traces of that disposition. With some the idea obtains that God keeps a debit and credit account, charging each individual with his evil deeds, and giving him credit for all his good deeds, and that if the good overbalance the evil, then God owes him a reward. With this idea, more or less clearly defined, most worldlings flatter themselves that their case will be all right at the last. *BEST February 1, 1892, par. 1*

Many professors often imagine that God is under some obligation to them, and they manifest it in various ways. If they have given somewhat liberally to the cause of God, and have not been prospered as they think they should be, they withhold their gifts. They do not propose to work for the Lord unless they can receive at once large returns on the investment. Others find it difficult when times are hard to make as good a living for their families as they desire, and so they say, “We cannot afford to keep the Sabbath.” As much as to say, “If God does not furnish me with everything I want, he need not expect my services.” Still others look for their reward in appreciation of their work by their brethren. If their efforts are not estimated at their true value, they become discouraged, and refuse to work because they are not appreciated. *BEST February 1, 1892, par. 2*

Now against all feeling of this kind, our Lord utters a rebuke. Summing up the case, he says: “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.” The truth is that the obligation is upon the side of man. The fact that

God created us and preserves us alive, places man under obligation to give his whole service to God. Jeremiah says, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed." Every moment of man's life places him under greater obligation to God than he can ever hope to fulfill. And as this mercy is extended to all, it is not alone the professed Christian who owes service to God. Sinners are under as much obligation to God as though they had made a profession to serve him. But if we repent, and obey the commandments of God in every particular, how does the case stand then? We are still unprofitable servants. God is none the richer for our service. There is a vast amount of sin that we have committed in the past, and as we can do no more than our duty from day to day, we are still largely in debt. Were it not that Christ has been set forth "for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God," the best of men would fail to obtain heaven.*BEST February 1, 1892, par. 3*

And so after all that has been done, eternal life must be "the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." A proper appreciation of this would serve to keep us humble, and prevent many mistakes made on account of our self-sufficiency. Let us be careful lest we become lifted up because of the faith that we have, and so lose the grace of God which is promised to the humble. The more real faith we have in Christ the more will we acknowledge our entire dependence upon him, and our own utter weakness. Let us heed these words of the apostle: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." *Romans 12:3. BEST February 1, 1892, par. 4*



## February 15, 1892

“Christ the End of the Law” The Bible Echo 7, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

In *Romans 10:4* we read as follows: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.” Before showing what this text means, it may be well to briefly show what it does not mean. It does not mean that Christ has put an end to the law; because (1) Christ himself said concerning the law, “I am not come to destroy.” *Matthew 5:17*. (2) The prophet said that instead of destroying it, the Lord would “magnify the law, and make it honorable.” *Isaiah 42:21*. (3) The law was in Christ’s own heart. “Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” *Psalms 40:7, 8*. And (4) since the law is the righteousness of God, the foundation of his government, it could not by any possibility be abolished. See *Luke 16:17*. *BEST February 15, 1892, par. 1*

The reader must know that the word “end” does not necessarily mean “termination.” It is often used in the sense of design, object, or purpose. In *1 Timothy 1:5* the same writer says: “Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” The word here rendered “charity” is often rendered “love,” and is so rendered in this place in the New Version. In *John 5:3* we read: “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments;” and Paul himself says that “love is the fulfilling of the law.” *Romans 13:10*. In both these texts the same word (*agapa*) is used that occurs in *1 Timothy 1:5*. Therefore we say that this text means, Now the design of the commandment (or law) is that it should be kept. Everybody will recognize this as a self-evident fact. *BEST February 15, 1892, par. 2*

But this is not the ultimate design of the law. In the verse following the one under consideration Paul quotes Moses as saying of the law that “the man that doeth those things shall live by them.” Christ said to the young man, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” *Matthew 19:17*. Now since the design of the law

was that it should be kept, or, in other words, that it should produce righteous characters, and the promise is that those who are obedient shall live, we may say that the ultimate design of the law was to give life. And in harmony with this thought are the words of Paul, that the law “was ordained to life.” *Romans 7:19.BEST February 15, 1892, par. 3*

But “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” and “the wages of sin is death.” Thus it is impossible for the law to accomplish its design in making perfect characters and consequently giving life. When a man has once broken the law, no subsequent obedience can ever make his character perfect. And therefore the law which was ordained unto life, is found to be unto death. *Romans 7:10.BEST February 15, 1892, par. 4*

If we were to stop right here, with the law unable to accomplish its purpose, we should leave all the world under condemnation and sentence of death. Now we shall see that Christ enables man to secure both righteousness and life. We read that we are “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” *Romans 3:24.* “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Romans 5:1.* More than this, he enables us to keep the law. “For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” *2 Corinthians 5:21.* In Christ, therefore, it is possible for us to be made perfect-the righteousness of God,-and that is just what we would have been by constant and unvarying obedience to the law.*BEST February 15, 1892, par. 5*

Again we read: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.... For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” *Romans 8:1-4.BEST February 15, 1892, par. 6*

What could not the law do? It could not free a single guilty soul from condemnation. Why not?-Because it was “weak through the flesh.” There is no element of weakness in the law; the weakness is in the

flesh. It is not the fault of a good tool that it cannot make a sound pillar out of a rotten stick. The law could not cleanse a man's past record, and make him sinless; and poor, fallen man had no strength resting in his flesh to enable him to keep the law. And so God imputes to believers the righteousness of Christ, who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, so that "the righteousness of the law" might be fulfilled in their lives. And thus Christ is the end of the law.*BEST February 15, 1892, par. 7*

To conclude, then, we have found that the design of the law was that it should give life because of obedience. All men have sinned and been sentenced to death. But Christ took upon himself man's nature, and will impart of his own righteousness to those who accept his sacrifice, and finally, when they stand, through him, as doers of the law, he will fulfill to them its ultimate object, by crowning them with eternal life. And so we repeat, what we cannot too fully appreciate, that Christ is made unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."*BEST February 15, 1892, par. 8*

**September 15, 1892**

**“Living by Faith” The Bible Echo 7, 18.**

E. J. Waggoner

In *Romans 1:17* the apostle Paul makes the following statement: “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” This statement is the summing up of what the apostle has to say about the gospel. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, but only “to every one that believeth;” in it the righteousness of God is revealed. The righteousness of God is the perfect law of God, which is but the transcript of his own righteous will. All unrighteousness is sin, or the transgression of the law. The gospel is God’s remedy for sin; its work, therefore, must be to bring men into harmony with the law, to cause the workings of the righteous law to be manifested in their lives. But this is wholly a work of faith, the righteousness of God is revealed from “faith to faith,” faith in the beginning, and faith to the end, as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” *BEST September 15, 1892, par. 1*

This is true in all ages since the fall of man, and will be true until the saints of God have his name in their foreheads, and see him as he is. It was from the prophet Habakkuk (*2:4*) that the apostle quoted the statement. If the prophets had not revealed it, the first Christians could not have known of it; for they had only the Old Testament. To say that in the most ancient times men had but an imperfect idea of faith in Christ, is to say that there were no just men in those times. But Paul goes right back to the very beginning and cites an instance of saving faith. He says: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous.” *Hebrews 11:4*. He says of Noah, also, that it was by faith that he built the ark to the saving of his house; “by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” *Hebrews 11:7*. We say that their faith was in Christ, because it was faith unto salvation, and besides the name of Jesus “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” *Acts 4:12. BEST September 15, 1892, par. 2*

There are too many who try to live the Christian life on the strength of the faith which they exercised when they realized their need of pardon for the sins of their past life. They know that God alone can pardon sins, and that he does this through Christ; but they imagine that having once been started they must run the race in their own strength. We know that many have this idea, first, because we have heard some say so, and second, because there are such multitudes of professed Christians who show the working of no greater power than their own. If they ever have anything to say in social meeting, besides the ever-recurring formula, "I want to be a Christian, so that I may be saved," they tell only of a past experience, of the joy they had when they first believed. Of the joy of living for God, and of walking with him by faith, they know nothing, and he who tells of it speaks a strange language to them. But the apostle carries this matter of faith clear through to the glorious kingdom, in the following most forcible illustration:-*BEST September 15, 1892, par. 3*

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." *Hebrews 11:5, 6. BEST September 15, 1892, par. 4*

Note the argument to prove that Enoch was translated by faith: Enoch was translated because he walked with God, and had the testimony that he pleased God; but without faith it is impossible to please God. That is enough to prove the point. Without faith not an act can be performed that will meet the approval of God. Without faith the best deeds that a man can do will come infinitely short of the perfect righteousness of God, which is the only standard. Wherever real faith is found it is a good thing; but the best of faith in God to take away the load of the sins of the past will profit a person nothing unless it is carried right through in ever-increasing measure until the close of his probation.*BEST September 15, 1892, par. 5*

#### A CAUSE OF FAILURE

We have heard many people tell how hard they found it to do right; their Christian life was most unsatisfactory to them, being marked

only by failure, and they were tempted to give up in discouragement. No wonder they get discouraged; continual failure is enough to discourage anybody. The bravest soldier in the world would become faint-hearted if he had been defeated in every battle. Sometimes these persons will mournfully tell that they have about lost confidence in themselves. Poor souls, if they would only lose confidence in themselves entirely, and would put their whole trust in the one who is mighty to save, they would have a different story to tell. They would then “joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Says the apostle, “Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.” *Philippians 4:4*. The man who doesn’t rejoice in God, even though tempted and afflicted, is not fighting the good fight of faith. He is fighting the poor fight of self-confidence and defeat.*BEST September 15, 1892, par. 6*

All the promises of final happiness are to the overcomer. “To him that overcometh,” says Jesus, “will I give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” *Revelation 3:21*. “He that overcometh shall inherit all things,” says the Lord. *Revelation 21:7*. An overcomer is one who gains victories. The inheriting is not the overcoming; that is only the reward for overcoming. The overcoming is now; the victories to be gained are victories over the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life,-victories over self and selfish indulgences. The man who fights and sees the foe give way, may rejoice; nobody can keep him from rejoicing, for joy comes spontaneously as the result of seeing the enemy give way. Some folks look with dread upon the thought of having to wage a continual warfare with self and worldly lusts. That is because they do not as yet know anything about the joy of victory; they have experienced only defeat. But it isn’t so doleful a thing to battle constantly, when there is continual victory. The old veteran of a hundred battles, who has been victorious in every fight, longs to be at the scene of conflict. Alexander’s soldiers, who under his command never knew defeat, were always impatient to be led into the fray. Each victory increased their strength, which was born only of courage, and correspondingly diminished that of the vanquished foe. Now how may we gain continual victories in our spiritual warfare? Listen to the beloved disciples:-*BEST September 15, 1892, par. 7*

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” *1 John 5:4.BEST September 15, 1892, par. 8*

Read again the words of the apostle Paul:-*BEST September 15, 1892, par. 9*

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” *Galatians 2:20.BEST September 15, 1892, par. 10*

Here is the secret of strength. It is Christ, the Son of God, the one to whom all power in Heaven and earth is given, who does the work. If he lives in the heart to do the work, is it boasting to say that continual victories may be gained? Yes it is boasting; but it is boasting in the Lord, and that is allowable. Says the psalmist, “My soul shall make her boast in the Lord;” and Paul says: “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” *Galatians 6:14.BEST September 15, 1892, par. 11*

The soldiers of Alexander were reckoned invincible. Why? Was it because they were naturally stronger and more courageous than all their enemies? No; but because they were led by Alexander. Their strength was in his leadership. Under another leader they would often have been defeated. When the Union army was fleeing, panic-stricken, before the enemy at Winchester, the presence of Sheridan turned their defeat into victory. Without him the men were a quaking mob; with him at their head they were an invincible army. If you had listened to the remarks after the battle, of the soldiers who served under those and similar leaders, you would have heard the praises of their general mingled with all their rejoicing. They were strong because he was; they were inspired by the same spirit that he had.*BEST September 15, 1892, par. 12*

## October 1, 1892

“Christian Growth” The Bible Echo 7, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

The Christian life is a continual growth. Peter says: “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” *2 Peter 3:17, 18*. The only way to keep from falling from that which we have, is to grow. David says of the righteous man that “he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.” *Psalms 1:3*. This means continual growth. *BEST October 1, 1892, par. 1*

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gospel in the regions beyond them. *2 Corinthians 10:15, 16.* To the Thessalonians he wrote that he prayed exceedingly night and day, that he might see them, and might perfect that which was lacking in their faith. *1 Thessalonians 3:10.* And still later he wrote: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." *2 Thessalonians 1:3.* *BEST October 1, 1892, par. 4*

This last text contains the whole of the argument that we have made. Their faith grew, and as a consequence their charity abounded. Charity, or love, is the fulfilling of the law. It is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, and is a result of true faith, for faith works by love, and the only righteousness which will be accepted when the Lord comes is that which is by the faith of Christ, "the righteousness which is of God by faith." Such being the teaching of Scripture, there is no reason why we should not understand *Romans 1:17* just as it reads: The righteousness of God is revealed, or manifested, from faith to faith. *BEST October 1, 1892, par. 5*

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she learned more of him. In her case we have a clear instance of the revelation of the righteousness of God from faith to faith.*BEST October 1, 1892, par. 6*

The sum of the whole thing is that it is faith that brings God near to us. If we first believe that he is, he will reveal himself to us more fully. If we rejoice in that light and walk in it, our faith will be increased, and that will bring more light. As with Rahab, so with all. God does not grant us a blessing because we are righteous, but in order that we may become righteous. When our faith brings us to Christ, it is that we may learn of him. To our faith we add virtue and knowledge. But as faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, it follows that the more we really know—accept—of the word of God, the greater will be our faith. And so, increasing daily in faith, the just go on from strength to strength, until the dawning of the perfect day ushers them into the immediate presence of God.*BEST October 1, 1892, par. 7*

## October 15, 1892

“The Unconquerable Life” The Bible Echo 7, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness of apprehended it not.” *John 1:4, 5*, R.V. The marginal rendering, “overcome,” gives us the exact meaning of the text, and conveys a message of great comfort to the believer. Let us see what it is. *BEST October 15, 1892, par. 1*

CHRIST is the light of the world. See *John 8:12*. But His light is His life, as the text quoted states, he says, “I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” The whole world was in the darkness of sin. This darkness was due to lack of knowledge of GOD; as the apostle Paul says that the Gentiles are “darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of GOD because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardening of their heart.” *Ephesians 4:18*. *BEST October 15, 1892, par. 2*

Satan the ruler of the darkness of this world, had done his utmost to deceive man as to the true character of God. He had made the world believe that GOD was like a man-cruel, vindictive, and passionate. Even the Jews, the people whom GOD had chosen to be the bearers of light to the world, had departed from GOD, and while professedly separate from the heathen, were enveloped in heathen darkness. Then CHRIST came, and “The people which sat in darkness sought a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up.” *Matthew 4:16*. R.V. His name was EMANUEL, GOD with us. “GOD was in CHRIST.” GOD refuted the falsehoods of Satan, not by loud arguments, but simply by living His life among men, so that all might see it. He demonstrated the power of the life of GOD, and the possibility of its being manifested in men. *BEST October 15, 1892, par. 3*

The life which CHRIST lived was untainted by sin. Satan exerted all his powerful arts, yet he could not affect that spotless life. Its light

always shown with unwavering brilliancy. Because Satan could not produce the least shadow of sin in the life, he could not bring it within his power, that of the grave. No one could take CHRIST'S life from Him; He voluntarily laid it down. And for the same reason, when He had laid it down, Satan could not prevent Him from taking it up again. Said He: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My FATHER." *John 10:17, 18*. To the same intent are the words of the apostle Peter concerning Christ: "Whom GOD hath raised up having lose to the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." *Acts 2:24*. Thus was demonstrated the right of the Lord Jesus CHRIST to be made a high priest "after the power of an endless life." *Hebrews 7:16*. *BEST October 15, 1892, par. 4*

This endless, spotless life CHRIST gives to all who believe on Him. "As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true GOD, and Jesus CHRIST, whom thou hast sent." *John 17:2, 3*. CHRIST dwells in the hearts of all those who believe on Him. "I am crucified with CHRIST; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of GOD, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." *Galatians 2:20*. See also *Ephesians 3:16, 17*. *BEST October 15, 1892, par. 5*

CHRIST, the light of the world, dwelling in the hearts of His followers, constitutes them the light of the world. There light comes not from themselves, but comes from CHRIST, who dwells in them. Their life is not from themselves, but it is the life of CHRIST manifest in their mortal flesh. See *2 Corinthians 4:11*. This is what it is to live "a Christian life." *BEST October 15, 1892, par. 6*

This living light comes from GOD in a never-failing stream. The psalmist exclaims: "For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light." *Psalms 36:9*. "And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, a proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." *Revelation 22:1*. "And the Spirit and the Bride

say, Come. And let him that heareth, say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." *Revelation 22:17.BEST October 15, 1892, par. 7*

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." *John 6:53, 54*. This life of CHRIST we eat and drink by feasting upon His Word, for He added, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." *Verse 63*. CHRIST dwells in His inspired Word, and through it we get His life. This life is given freely to all who will receive it, as we read above; and again we read that Jesus stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." *John 7:37.BEST October 15, 1892, par. 8*

This life is the Christian's light, and it is that which makes him a light to others. It is his life; and the blessed comfort to him is that no matter how great the darkness to which he has to pass, no darkness has power to put out that light. That light of life is his as long as he exercises faith, and the darkness cannot affect it. But all, therefore, who professed the truth of the Lord, have the confidence that can say, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." *Micah 7:8.BEST October 15, 1892, par. 9*

## November 15, 1892

**“Can We Keep the Sabbath?” The Bible Echo 7, 22.**

E. J. Waggoner

There are thousands throughout the United States and in Europe who are ready at once to answer this question in the affirmative, for they know by experience that it is possible. Indeed, the question really admits of only one answer, and that is, “Yes; we can if we want to.” But there are many persons who imagine that they cannot keep the Sabbath, and for their benefit I propose to consider some of the so-called reasons which they give. This article is not intended for those who, in order to avoid the acknowledgment that the seventh day is the Sabbath, plead that the world is round, that time has been lost, and other flimsy objections against the Sabbath. It is only for those who acknowledge the truth of the Bible, are fully convinced that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, and know that it is the duty of all men to keep it, but fancy that they are so situated that it would be impossible for them to do so. I say they fancy, for it is not so in fact. No individual was ever yet placed in such a position that he could not do what was certainly his duty to do. He might find it difficult, and perhaps unpleasant, but never impossible. *BEST November 15, 1892, par. 1*

“I would like to keep the Sabbath,” says one, but my business will not let me.” Well, if this is really the case, then get some other business that will not hinder. If you saw that your present business was greatly injuring your health, and would cause your death in a few months, unless abandoned, you would lose no time in changing your occupation. But by disobeying GOD you lose his favor, and this will bring eternal death. *BEST November 15, 1892, par. 2*

“But I could not live if I were to keep the Sabbath.” This is of the same stamp as the reason given above, and is offered alike by those who are in prosperous business, and those who labor for their daily bread. How do you know that you could not live? Are there not thousands who are keeping the Sabbath, and do not they live? Ask those who have tried it, and see what testimony they bear. It is true, you may not be able to amass quite so much property, but “what is

a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"*BEST November 15, 1892, par. 3*

But let us consider this matter further. You say you cannot live if you keep the Sabbath. Are you sure that you can if you do not keep it? Have you any guarantee that your life will be continued indefinitely? Do those who violate GOD'S law live any longer on an average than those who keep it? You certainly know of no one who is not subject to death. The psalmist says: "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" *Psalm 89:48*. "It is appointed unto men once to die," and this without any distinction in regard to age or belief. Then why do you assume that you will be exempt if you do not keep the Sabbath.*BEST November 15, 1892, par. 4*

"But," our friend will doubtless reply, "I expect, of course, to die sometime in the natural course of events, whether I keep the Sabbath or not; what I mean is, that I shall not be able to earn a living for myself and family." Well, you profess to believe the Bible; let us see what it says in regard to this matter. "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your HEAVENLY FATHER knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." *Matthew 6:31-33*. Could any promise be plainer than this? If it does not mean just what it says, it does not mean anything. And GOD is fully able to fulfill this promise. Just consider what a vast estate he has. Here is a description of it: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." *Psalm 50:10-12*. Surely you need have no fear of starving, if you serve such a Master as that.*BEST November 15, 1892, par. 5*

Listen to another promise: "Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." *Psalm 37:3*. There you have the promise; now listen to the testimony of one who had an opportunity to know, as to how this promise is fulfilled: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen

the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” *Verse 25.* You can verify this in your own experience if you choose. Who are they that form the great army of tramps, that wander through the country begging bread? Are they Christians, as a class? Are they those who have sunk their property in the service of GOD? I think no one ever saw a tramp that was noted for his piety. An active worker in the Young Men’s Christian Association says that of the hundreds who have applied for charity to the institution with which he is connected, all are irreligious persons, and that he has never known a regular attendant of church to apply for alms. Truly, “the blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.”*BEST November 15, 1892, par. 6*



## December 1, 1892

**“Can We Keep the Sabbath?” The Bible Echo 7, 23.**

E. J. Waggoner

A quite common objection that people urge against keeping the Sabbath is that it is peculiar, and that very few people observe it. There are two classes of people who make use of this argument. The first class attempts to make capital out of it against the Sabbath, and argue that since the Sabbath is observed by so very few people, it cannot be right, assuming that the majority must be right. The second class believe that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD, but have not the courage to live out their convictions of duty. They say, “If everybody else would keep the Sabbath, I would be glad to do so too.” *BEST December 1, 1892, par. 1*

The first class might easily be convinced if they wished to be. Let us see to what absurdity the theory that the majority must be right will lead us. Less than four hundred years ago it was the universal belief that the earth was flat, and that it was stationary. For hundreds of years no one had thought of questioning this belief; and when, finally, a few bold spirits ventured to advance the idea that the earth is spherical, and that it moves, they were regarded as fanatics and dangerous heretics. But the proof that the earth is round was convincing, and now all enlightened nations hold to that belief. Now if it be true that the majority must be right, we must conclude that several centuries ago the earth was really flat, but that, as people advanced in knowledge it gradually assumed its present shape. Many other conclusions equally absurd must be accepted if we hold to the theory that whatever is popularly believed is right. But the advocates of that theory rarely urge it on any subject except the Sabbath. The truth is that the opinions of men have no effect whatever on facts. Men's opinions change, but the truth is always the same. *BEST December 1, 1892, par. 2*

Those who dare not venture out alone to obey the truth, may have their faith strengthened by considering some cases that are on record. Paul says in *Romans 15:4*, that “whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through

patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”*BEST December 1, 1892, par. 3*

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews contains a list of notable men. We are referred to Noah, who “walked with GOD” in an age when the “wickedness of man was great in the earth,” and “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” It must have been no slight effort for Noah to face the world with such an unpopular truth as that the world was to be destroyed by a flood. No doubt he was jeered at in a most unmerciful manner, and considered a fool, but the event proved the wisdom of his course. Had he waited for people enough to accept the truth for that time to make it respectable, before commencing to build the ark, he would have been drowned with the rest.*BEST December 1, 1892, par. 4*

Abraham is another individual who is held up as an example of faith. I think we do not generally realize the full extent of the sacrifice that he made when he obeyed the command, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, and unto a land that I will show thee.” His father’s family, as we learn from *Joshua 24:2, 3*, were idolaters. No doubt he had to endure much opposition and ridicule from his relatives, for thus leaving them and going away with apparently no object whatever, without even knowing where he was going. No one who starts out to obey GOD in these times can have a darker prospect to all outward appearances, than Abraham had. Had he drawn back, instead of becoming the father of all the faithful, his name might never have appeared among them. Other instances might be cited indefinitely.*BEST December 1, 1892, par. 5*

Who does not honour those moral heroes? and who has not wished that he might be even like them, and be accounted worthy to share in their reward? Well, who is there that cannot? They were men, subject to weaknesses and temptations the same as men are nowadays. They lived in the world, associated with their fellow-men, and transacted business, the same as men do now. How, then, did they become so honored of GOD?—Simply because they were willing to be regarded as peculiar; they thought more of GOD’S approval than they did of the applause of men. For this we hold them in high esteem, yet we shrink from doing what we commend in

them. We may, however, be like them if we will, for their cases are recorded, as Paul says, simply for our encouragement. *BEST December 1, 1892, par. 6*

We shall find, if we study carefully, that the Bible says much in favor of *peculiar* people. The Jews were brought out from Egyptian bondage that they might serve the Lord, and be a peculiar people. Paul says in *Titus 2:14* that CHRIST “gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” The apostle here speaks especially to those who are “looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour JESUS CHRIST.” It seems, then, that the people of God need not hope to become popular in these days any more than in the past. Christ was very unpopular: “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” *John 1:11*. Very few believed on him, and they were of the most despised class, and at the last even these forsook him, while he suffered the most bitter persecution. And what does he say to his disciples? If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.” Those, then, who are waiting for truth to become popular before accepting it, will wait in vain. *BEST December 1, 1892, par. 7*

One thought in regard to this expression, “peculiar people.” The idea is not meant to be conveyed that people are to strive to make themselves conspicuous by their peculiarity. The people of GOD are peculiar simply because they are “zealous of good works,” in a time when men (professed Christians) are “lovers of their own selves,” “despisers of those that are good,” etc. *2 Timothy 3:1-5*. CHRIST was peculiar in this respect, yet he was a pattern of humility. This people are to be like him; not despised on account of individual peculiarities, but because of their steadfast adherence to truth. “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” *John 15:18, 19*. *BEST December 1, 1892, par. 8*

One thought more: If we keep the commandments of GOD, we are GOD’S servants. If we refuse to obey him, whose servants are we?—We certainly must be the servants of Satan. There is no neutral

ground. "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." Now suppose you continue in sin, and sin is nothing else but the transgression of the law (*1 John 3:4*), what is your prospect for living? Here is it: "For the wages of sin is death." *Romans 6:23*. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." *Ezekiel 18:20*. You say you cannot live if you keep all GOD'S commandments; GOD says you cannot live if you do not keep them. If your statement were true, you would only lose this present life, and many men in times past have lost their lives for the truth of GOD, and we honor them for it; but if you disobey GOD, you will lose eternal life. Jesus says: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." *Matthew 16:25*. Satan may promise well, but he has nothing but the treasures of this world to offer, and they are all forfeited, so that he has really nothing to offer you. How different is the service of GOD. The apostle says: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." *1 Timothy 4:8*. But the promises of GOD and happiness to those who fear GOD are almost innumerable. Not a tithe of them has been given. Surely those mentioned are sufficient to enable anyone to trust GOD. *BEST December 1, 1892, par. 9*

Who is not willing to suffer with CHRIST? When he endured so much for us, can we not endure a little for him? If it were possible for us to get to heaven without any suffering, would we not feel ashamed to say that we had never suffered for him? We have also this to comfort us, that whenever we suffer for the truth, he suffers with us, and accounts all injury done to his people as done to himself. And to crown all, we are assured that "if we suffer we shall also reign with him," and that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." *BEST December 1, 1892, par. 10*

